

BOOK REVIEW

SPENCER, K.A. 1981. A revisionary study of the leaf-mining flies (Agromyzidae) of California. Division of Agricultural Sciences, University of California, Special Publication 3273. iv + 489 pages containing 655 figures. \$20 U.S.

This work is essentially a regional fauna, with description of new species and revisionary comments included as necessary. It raises the number of agromyzid species recorded in California to 252, of which 132 are described as new. Californian dipterists will find Spencer's treatment a sound foundation for further studies, and I hope they will be inspired to make it out of date as soon as possible. At 252 species the total of known Californian species is surely still underdocumented in comparison with the well over 300 species now known in the British Isles. I would expect the real total of Californian species to be in excess of 500 in view of the great diversity of climates and habitats represented in that state.

Two new taxa of the genus-group are proposed in this work: *Galiomyza* (type-species *Agromyza morio* Brishke) for certain leaf-miners of Rubiaceae formerly included in a heterogenous concept of *Praspedomyza*, and *Annimyzella* (type-species *Agromyza maculosa* Malloch) as a subgenus of *Amauromyza*. These proposals seem to me justified.

In general the taxonomic treatment is up-to-date, but the synonymy of *Metopomyza griffithsi* Sehgal with *M. scutellata* (Fallén) proposed on page 336 has been refuted in the special study of *Metopomyza* contained in Tschirnhaus' (1981) work "Die Halm- und Minierfliegen im Grenzbereich Land-See der Nordsee" (Spixiana, suppl. 6). Spencer's figure of the aedeagus of a Californian specimen (Fig. 487) agrees with that of *M. griffithsi* described from Alberta. The true *M. scutellata* has not been demonstrated to occur in North America.

The generic position of the new species described as *Phytomyza minutissima* Spencer needs further study. This species does not run to *Phytomyza* in Spencer's generic key because of the lack of orbital setulae. Reduction of the aedeagal sclerotization makes the relationship of the species difficult to interpret. On the basis of the information given, it could alternatively belong to *Paraphytomyza* or *Gymnophytomyza* as well as to *Phytomyza*.

The 655 figures were mostly prepared by the author's wife Ann and are of her usual good quality. Some figures have been reproduced from previous publications, but most are original. Scale lines have unfortunately been omitted.

While the content of this work meets with my approval and I have no hesitation in recommending it to students of North American Diptera, there are some shortcomings in the presentation. Offset printing has been used without reduction on pages of the standard size for typing paper (8.5 x 11 inches). This results in an unnecessarily large volume which is too heavy in relation to the strength of its (paper) binding. Libraries and regular users of the work will need to have their copies rebound with hard covers. It would have been to the benefit of all concerned if the page size had been reduced and stronger binding used. The figures were intended for 1/3 reduction, and considerable reduction in the space occupied by text could have been achieved by use of single spacing. The proof reading has also been remiss, as evidenced by the tantalizing references to "p. " which appear frequently in the text. Page 7 has been duplicated (appearing again as p. 12). More careful editing of future publications in this series is called for.

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